

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOI/PA
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET
FOI/PA# 1341051-1

Total Deleted Page(s) = 46

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F B I

Date: 12/8/72

19

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)TO : ACTING DIRECTOR, AND SACS, ALEXANDRIA
WFO
OMAHA

FROM: SAC, CHICAGO (149-NEW)

CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE,
A BOEING SEVEN THREE SEVEN, AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, DECEMBER
EIGHT, SEVENTYTWO. DAMV.

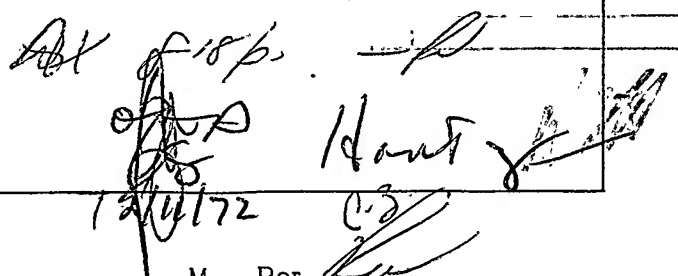
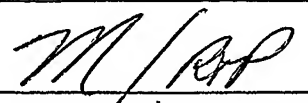
RE CHICAGO TELEPHONE CALLS TO THE BUREAU AND ALEXANDRIA,
AND WFO, INSTANT.

CAPTIONED PLANE, A BOEING SEVEN THREE SEVEN, CRASHED AT
SEVENTIETH AND LAWDALE AVENUE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, AT
APPROXIMATELY TWO TWENTYONE PM THIS DATE. THE PLANE
DEPARTED WASHINGTON, D.C., AT TWELVE FORTY PM CST AND WAS
SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE AT MIDWAY AIRPORT, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
AT TWO THIRTYONE PM CST. THERE WERE FIFTYTWO PASSENGERS
AND A CREW OF SIX WHICH INCLUDED THREE STEWARDESSES AND THREE
FLIGHT OFFICERS.

THIRTEEN PASSENGERS AND TWO STEWARDESSES ARE ALIVE AND
HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

CWC/slc
(1)

149-1060-1

Approved: 
Special Agent in ChargeSent MPer 

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

CG 149-NEW

PAGE TWO

THE PLANE CRASHED INTO SEVERAL SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS. THE NUMBER OF INJURIES AND FATALITIES TO PERSONS IN THE CRASH AREA IS NOT KNOWN AT THIS TIME. THERE WERE SEVERAL FIRES TRIGGERED BY CRASH. > SUPERINTENDENT JAMES CONLISK, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, PD, AND CAPTAIN EXECUTIVE, UAL, ELK GROVE VILLAGE, ILLINOIS, HAVE REQUESTED THE SERVICE OF THE FBI DISASTER UNIT.

A PLAYBACK OF THE RECORDING TAPE AT MIDWAY AIRPORT INDICATES POSSIBLE PILOT ERROR. ACCORDING TO THE TAPE ^{AS} FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE APPROACHED RUNWAY, A SMALL AIRCRAFT WAS ALREADY ON THE RUNWAY, THE PILOT OF FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE WAS INSTRUCTED TO MAKE A LEFT TURN AND COME TO A HEADING OF ONE EIGHTY DEGREES. THE PILOT ACKNOWLEDGED THE TRANSMISSION AND THE PLANE DISAPPEARED FROM RADAR. THE TAPE THEN INDICATES A FLUTTERING SOUND WHICH MIGHT HAVE COME FROM THE STALL SPEED INDICATOR, INDICATING THE PILOT HAD LOST HIS SPEED AND CRASHED.

TWO STEWARDESSES AND A FEDERAL NARCOTICS AGENT WHO WERE ABOARD THIS PLANE HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED BY BUAGENTS AND THEY

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

CG 149-NEW

PAGE THREE

STATE NOTHING UNUSUAL HAPPENED PRIOR TO CRASH.

COMPLETE PASSENGER MANIFEST OBTAINED FROM UAL WITH
CONTACT POINTS FOR ALL PASSENGERS.CLOSE LIAISON BEING MAINTAINED WITH CPD AND
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD.U. S. CONGRESSMAN GEORGE COLLINS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
HAS BEEN MANIFESTED ABOARD THIS FLIGHT ACCORDING TO UAL RECORDS.
NO OTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING COLLINS AT THIS TIME.ASAC, CHICAGO, ON SCENE AND HANDLING INVESTIGATION
PERSONALLY.INFORMATION COPY TO OMAHA AS FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE
WAS TO TERMINATE OMAHA.Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

(Title) _____

(File No.)

149-1060-1A

Date Filed		Disposition
1)	Receipts of photo of crash scene.	
2)	Receipt for Link murder from United 553.	
3)	Receipt for Link murder from United 553.	
1-16-73 BV 4)	Photo of crash scene.	
11-9-73 BV 5)	Tape recording & transcription of same; copy of receipt for tape.	
6)	Tape of Hot Line phone message on 11-2-73.	

149-1060-1A

SEARCHED _____	INDEXED _____
SERIALIZED <u>BV</u>	FILED <u>BV</u>
JAN 3 1973	
FBI - CHICAGO	

File No. 149- 1060-1A¹Date Received 12/8/72From _____
(NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR)_____
(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)_____
(CITY AND STATE)By John Watson
(NAME OF SPECIAL AGENT)~~To Be Returned~~ ☐ Yes
☒ NoReceipt given ☐ Yes
☒ No

Description:

Negatives of photos
of crash scene.

File No. 149-1060-1A²

Date Received 12/18/72

From [Redacted]

Air Soft
(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)

United Transportation Group

By [Redacted]

To Be Returned ☐ Yes
☒ No

Receipt given ☒ Yes
☐ No

Description:

*receipt for flight
recorded from
unit id 553.*

b6
b7C



AIR SAFETY INVESTIGATOR

b6

b7C

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION
SAFETY BOARD
BUREAU OF AVIATION SAFETY

2300 E. DEVON AVE.
DES PLAINES, ILL. 60018

12/8/72

Turned to [redacted]
on 12/8/72 one flight recorder
from flight 553, United Airlines,
enroute to Washington airport.

[redacted]

b6
b7C

SA

[redacted]

FAI

149-1066

File No. 149-1060-1A3

Date Received 12/8/74

From [Redacted]

National Transportation
(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)

Safety Board.

By [Redacted]
(NAME OF SPECIAL AGENT)

To Be Returned ☐ Yes
☒ No

Receipt given ☒ Yes
☐ No

Description:

receipt for flight
records from
United 553

b6
b7C

This is a receipt for the voice recorder
from flight # 83 United Airlines
furnished by SA [redacted] on 12/8/72
to [redacted] Safety Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board.

b6
b7C

6:35
/p

SA FMI 8/ 12/8/72

File No. 149-1060
Date Received 12-8-72
From ROBERT SANDERS
(NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR)
CBS RADIO (WBBM) 630 N.
(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)
MCCLURG COURT. CHICAGO, ILL.
By
(NAME OF SPECIAL AGENT)

To Be Returned ☐ Yes
☒ No

Receipt given ☒ Yes
☐ No

Description:

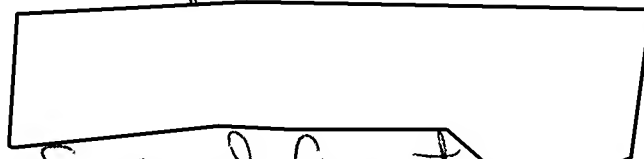
ONE (1) COPY OF RECEIPT
FURNISHED TO SANDERS
RE. TAPE RECORDING
OF INTERVIEW WITH

b6
b7c

CBS
630 N. McClurg Court

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Dec. 8, 1972

I have received this date from
BOB SANDERS me (1) copy of a
tape recording which consists of a
telephone conversation between BOB
SANDERS and an unidentified male
regarding the crash of a United
Airlines 737 jet aircraft on this
date.



Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

b6
b7c

File No. 149-1060-1A5

Date Received 12/8/72

From CBS Radio

630 N. Mc Clellan

By William J. Darter

To Be Returned ☐

No ☒

Description:

Tape recording and transcription
of some.
copy of receipt for tape

Tape destroyed
per SA [redacted]
instructions
11-9-13 J

b6
b7C

ANNOUNCER:

We have a tape rolling here. We'd like to talk to you. Tell us what you know about this crash.

UNKNOWN MALE:

I, well, I was listening to aircraft radio, I have an aircraft band and I was monitoring Midway Tower and there was a business jet in front about five minutes before and it was not too clear, the radio was not too clear, but it appeared he lost sight of the runway and had to abort his landing and made a left turn-out. He came around and contacted Midway approach again and he was, as he was coming around again, United 553 was in back of him. His air speed, the business jet's air speed was 120 miles per hour and I believe the United jet's was 160 and he was overtaking him, the tower asked him at first asked the business jet to take the right runway but then told him to forget it and to land on the left runway.

And told the United jet to make a left turn out to a south heading of 180 degrees and that is when he lost contact with the jet and that is the last I heard of the jet too.

ANNOUNCER:

Do you often monitor these aircraft conversations?

UNKNOWN MALE:

Yes sir.

ANNOUNCER:

What do you gather from this, now you have told me in technical terms which our listeners can't understand. What do you get from this conversation?

UM:

How do you mean, what do I get? I understand distance between the two jets was too close and that one either had to make a left turn out. You see, this business jet had already once made a left turn out which meant the approach pattern was, it was all messed up and it was mostly being played by ear and the United jet was much too fast, it was overtaking the business jet and was told to make the left turn out. It wasn't really standard operating procedure at all.

ANNOUNCER:

Now you say he lost sight of the runway?

UM:

I believe that's what it was. Because

as they get lower, as they get toward 63rd and Cicero on the threshold of the runway, the radio becomes a little fuzzier and all I heard was, I forget what the name of...small business jet was a Sabreliner and all I heard was that he was supposed to make a left turn out to 190 degrees and contact approach. and the only reason I could think of this was I believe after he lost sight of the runway, because after that, the controller in the tower told all planes approaching the runway to tell him when they had the runway in sight and I know that Midway's visibility is now instrumental, only. Its not visual, its less than a mile visibility with a 5,000 foot ceiling.

ANNOUNCER:

How did it happen that these two planes got so close together in the approach pattern?

UM:

It was because the business jet had to abort its first approach and then had to make a second approach into Midway

again and United 553 was already on a set approach pattern and that they have a time, I believe to about four miles between the planes but because this business jet had to abort its landing and come around again, this distance was made closer and consequently the distance between the planes was too close to make a safe landing between the two.

ANNOUNCER:

Was the last thing you heard from the tower or one of the planes?

UM:

The last thing I heard was the controller asking United 553 to come in about three or four times after he told him to make a left turn out to a south heading and he did not make any contact and he after about a minute, he told United 553 if anyone in United 553 was still monitoring the tower to contact Chicago O'Hare on 1-18-4 which is a departure frequency for O'Hare.

ANNOUNCER:

Was there any panic in anyone's voice in this communication?

UM

I really can't tell because the controllers are more or less, I admire them because they more or less are equipped to handle any type of danger and I really didn't hear any tone of worry except when he could not contact the United jet.

ANNOUNCER:

Will you give me your name?

UM:

No sir, I want to withhold that, okay?

ANNOUNCER:

That's okay, is what you are doing this monitoring of this conversation, is this illegal?

UM:

No sir, it's perfectly legal, as far as I know because they sell aircraft band radios to the public, and there is no law against it if they sell it I would suppose.

ANNOUNCER:

But you do not care to identify yourself?

UM:

No sir

ANNOUNCER:

Then, thank you very much

File No. 149-1060-1A6

Date Received 11/2/73

From Geo. P. [Signature]
(NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR)

(ADDRESS OF CONTRIBUTOR)

(CITY AND STATE)

By Geo. P. [Signature]
(NAME OF SPECIAL AGENT)

To Be Returned ☐ Yes ☒ No

Receipt given ☐ Yes ☒ No

Description:

Tape of Hot Line
phone message on
11/2/73

RE UNITED AIRLINES CRASH
MIDWAY AIRPORT DECEMBER 1972

ATTACHED IS "SHERMAN SKOLNIKS"
PRESENTATION TAPED ON NOV. 2, 1973.

HOLD TAPE & INCLUDE IN ABOVE CASE
PER SAC HELD'S INSTRUCTIONS

SA GEO H. PARFET

AI
EXTE

F B I

Date: 12/9/72

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)

TO ACTING DIRECTOR
FROM CHICAGO (149-NEW)

CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE,
A BOEING SEVEN THREE SEVEN, AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
DECEMBER EIGHT, SEVENTYTWO. DAMV.

RE BUCALL TWELVE EIGHT LAST AND CG TEL TO BUREAU
TWELVE EIGHT LAST.

ON SCENE INVESTIGATION INDICATES PILOT ERROR AS
CAUSE OF CRASH.

NO INFORMATION RECEIVED OR DEVELOPED BY CHICAGO
TO INDICATE CAUSE OF CRASH DUE TO SABOTAGE.

THREE VICTIMS, ON BOARD AIRCRAFT, INTERVIEWED. NO
INDICATION OF SABOTAGE OR SKYJACKING.

REVIEW OF TAPED CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN PILOT AND
TOWER DETERMINED STALL INDICATOR ACTIVATED JUST PRIOR
TO CRASH, DENOTING FLIGHT SPEED INSUFFICIENT AT TIME
PILOT RECEIVED LANDING WAVE OFF.

INVESTIGATION CONTINUING. BUREAU WILL BE KEPT
ADVISED.

Approved: BKM/MD
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 320 A M

Per ry

F B I

Date 12/9/72

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via Teletype
~~TELETYPE~~ URGENT
(Priority)

TO ACTING DIRECTOR
FROM CHICAGO (149-NEW)

CRASH OF UNITED AIR LINES FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE,
BOEING SEVEN THREE SEVEN, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, DECEMBER
EIGHT LAST, DAMV.

RE CHICAGO TEL DECEMBER EIGHT LAST.

NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTIGATION IN VICINITY OF AREA OF
CRASH OF UAL FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE REFLECTS INFORMATION
FROM WITNESSES TO EFFECT THAT AIRPLANE WAS UNDER OBSERVATION
UNTIL IT DISAPPEARED AND CRASHED. WITNESSES STATED THERE
WAS NO EXPLOSION OR APPARENT DAMAGE TO AIRCRAFT BEFORE CRASH
AND IT APPEARED TO BE MUSHROOMING INTO THE HOUSES.
THE TAIL WAS DOWN, NOSE ELEVATED ABOUT FORTY-FIVE DEGREES
AND UNABLE TO GAIN ALTITUDE.

INFORMATION FROM FAA REFLECTS NO POSSIBILITY OF ANY
CAUSE OF CRASH OTHER THAN PILOT ERROR. ACCORDING TO CONSENSUS
OF INFORMATION FROM WITNESSES AND TOWER AT MIDWAY AIRPORT,

149-1050-3

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M

Per _____

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

PAGE TWO

THE FOLLOWING IS WHAT OCCURRED LEADING UP TO CRASH OF UAL
FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE:

UAL FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE WAS ON FINAL APPROACH FOR
LANDING AT MIDWAY AIRPORT FOLLOWING A SMALL PRIVATE
AIRCRAFT. TOWER OBSERVED THAT DISTANCE BETWEEN FIVE FIVE
THREE AND PRIVATE AIRCRAFT WAS BECOMING MARGINAL. FIVE
FIVE THREE WAS ORDERED TO PULL OFF FROM APPROACH TURNING
LEFT TO A HEADING OF ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DEGREES. THE PILOT
APPARENTLY THREW FULL THROTTLE TO THE ENGINES AND STARTED
TO TURN TO THE LEFT AT THE SAME TIME, PULLING UP THE NOSE OF
THE AIRCRAFT. THIS MANEUVER APPARENTLY CAUSED THE AIRCRAFT
TO STALL
AND MUSHROOM INTO THE GROUND.

PERSONS INTERVIEWED INCLUDING FOUR SURVIVORS OF THE
CRASH AND FAA INVESTIGATORS, IN ADDITION TO NEIGHBORHOOD
WITNESSES DEVELOPED NOTHING WHICH COULD INDICATE ANY
REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A VIOLATION OF THE DAMV STATUTE EXISTS.

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

PAGE THREE

DISASTER SQUAD HAS ARRIVED IN CHICAGO AND IT IS PRESENTLY AT COUNY MORGUE IDENTIFYING DEAD PASSENGERS. POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED ARE EIGHT BODIES. THERE ARE ONLY TWELVE BODIES WITH WHICH THE DISASTER SQUAD CAN WORK. THERE ARE FORTY FIVE BODIES AT THE MORGUE, THIS WOULD INCLUDE TWO PERSONS WHO WERE ON THE GROUND, WHO RESIDED IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF CRASH. THERE IS A TOTAL OF EIGHTEEN SURVIVORS.

FOR INFORMATION OF THE BUREAU, NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB) SURVEYING CRASH SCENE. ENTIRE AREA EXTENSEVILY PHOTOGRAPHED BY FBI AND SCENE DIAGRAMED. LIASION BEING MAINTAINED WITH NTSB.

UACB NO FURTHER INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED OTHER THAN TO ASSIST DISASTER SQUAD IN IDENTIFYING BODIES.

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

F B I

Date: 12/9/72

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)TO : ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, CHICAGO (149-NEW)

CRASH OF UNITED AIR LINES FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE,
BOEING SEVEN THREE SEVEN, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, DECEMBER
EIGHT LAST, DAMV.

RE CHICAGO TEL DECEMBER EIGHT LAST.

NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTIGATION IN VICINITY OF AREA OF
CRASH OF UAL FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE REFLECTS INFORMATION
FROM ~~SEVERAL~~ WITNESSES TO EFFECT THAT AIRPLANE WAS UNDER
OBSERVATION UNTIL IT DISAPPEARED AND CRASHED. WITNESSES
STATED THERE WAS NO EXPLOSION OR APPARENT DAMAGE TO AIRCRAFT.

BEFORE CRASH AND IT APPEARED TO BE MUSHROOMING INTO THE
HOUSES. ~~THE TAIL WAS DOWN, NOSE UP AND UNABLE TO~~ ^{ELEVATED ABOUT 45 DEGREES}
~~SEVERAL WITNESSES OBSERVED SPARKS EMITTED FROM~~
~~CRASH ALTITUDE.~~
~~AIRCRAFT. BUT THEY BELIEVED THIS CAUSED BY AIRPLANE HITTING~~
~~POWER LINES.~~

INFORMATION FROM FAA REFLECTS NO POSSIBILITY OF ANY
CAUSE OF CRASH OTHER THAN PILOT ERROR. ACCORDING TO CONSENSUS
OF INFORMATION FROM WITNESSES AND TOWER AT MIDWAY AIRPORT,

KMG/kpr

(1) *KMG*

149-1000-34
Searched _____
Serialized *B* _____
Indexed _____
Filed *B* _____

Approved: *KMG*
Special Agent in Charge

Sent *2:34* MPer *KMG*

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

PAGE TWO

CG 149-NEW

THE FOLLOWING IS WHAT OCCURRED LEADING UP TO CRASH OF UAL
FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE:

UAL FLIGHT FIVE FIVE THREE WAS ON FINAL APPROACH FOR
LANDING AT MIDWAY AIRPORT ~~AND~~ FOLLOWING A SMALL PRIVATE
AIRCRAFT. TOWER OBSERVED THAT ~~SEPARATION~~ DISTANCE BETWEEN
FIVE FIVE THREE AND PRIVATE AIRCRAFT WAS BECOMING MARGINAL.
FIVE FIVE THREE WAS ORDERED TO PULL OFF FROM APPROACH
TURNING LEFT TO A HEADING OF ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY DEGREES.
THE PILOT APPARENTLY THREW FULL THROTTLE TO THE ENGINES
AND STARTED TO TURN TO THE LEFT AT THE SAME TIME, PULLING
UP THE NOSE OF THE AIRCRAFT. THIS MANEUVER APPARENTLY
CAUSED THE AIRCRAFT TO STALL AND MUSHROOM. INTO THE GROUND.

~~A NUMBER OF~~ PERSONS ~~HAVE BEEN~~ INTERVIEWED INCLUDING ~~FOUR~~ ^{FOUR}
~~THE~~ SURVIVORS OF THE CRASH AND FAA INVESTIGATORS, IN ADDITION
TO NEIGHBORHOOD WITNESSES, [→] NOTHING DEVELOPED WHICH WOULD
INDICATE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A VIOLATION OF THE DAMV
STATUTE EXISTS.

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

F B I

Date:

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)Via _____
(Priority)

PAGE THREE

CG 149-NEW

DISASTER SQUAD HAS ARRIVED IN CHICAGO AND IT IS PRESENTLY AT COUNTY MORGUE IDENTIFYING DEAD PASSENGERS. POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED ARE EIGHT BODIES. THERE ARE ONLY TWELVE BODIES WITH WHICH THE DISASTER SQUAD CAN WORK. THERE ARE FORTY FIVE BODIES AT THE MORGUE, THIS WOULD INCLUDE TWO PERSONS WHO WERE ON THE GROUND. *who resides in neighborhood of crash.* THERE IS A TOTAL OF EIGHTEEN SURVIVORS.

FOR INFORMATION OF THE BUREAU, NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD (NTSB) ~~HAS TAKEN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION~~ *Surveying* ~~INTO THE CRASH. THE ENTIRE AREA HAS BEEN SEALED OFF AND~~ *scene. Entire area extensively photographed* ~~THEY ARE BEGINNING TO LOCATE AND RETRIEVE THE PARTS OF~~ *by FBI and scene diagrammed. Reason being* ~~THE AIRCRAFT.~~ *maintained until NTSB.*

UACB, NO FURTHER INVESTIGATION BEING CONDUCTED OTHER THAN TO ASSIST DISASTER SQUAD IN IDENTIFYING BODIES.

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

149-NKW

219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604
December 11, 1972

Mr. James B. Conlisk, Jr.
Superintendent
Chicago Police Department
1121 South State Street
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Jim:

This Bureau is conducting an investigation regarding the tragic crash of an United Air Lines jet near Midway Airport on December 8, 1972. It would assist us a great deal in our investigation if you would authorize for the Bureau, color photographs of the scene such as those obtained by your Graphic Arts Section at the site.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

ROY K. MOORE
Special Agent in Charge

2 - Addressee
(1 - Graphic Arts Section)
① - Chicago
JHW/kpr
(3) *[initials]*

[Handwritten signature]

149-1060-4

Searched _____
Serialized B
Indexed _____
Filed B



RICHARD J. DALEY, Mayor
JAMES B. CONLISK, JR., Superintendent

December 22, 1972

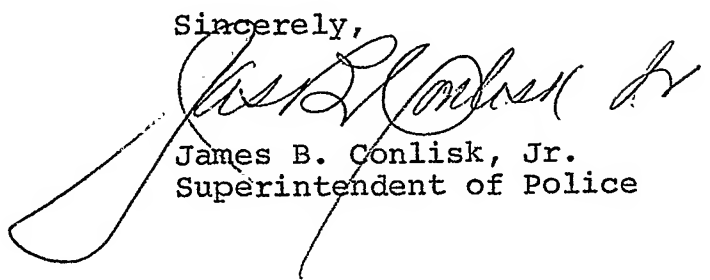
Mr. Roy K. Moore
Federal Bureau of Investigation
219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear Roy:

Enclosed are photographs of the
December 8, Midway Air Crash, taken by police
photographers as you requested.

Please call upon the Chicago Police
Department at any time you feel we can be of
service.

Sincerely,


James B. Conlisk, Jr.
Superintendent of Police

Enclosures

149-1060-6

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
DEC 29 1972	
CHICAGO	

1-3

b6
b7c

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, CHICAGO (149-New)

DATE: 12/9/72

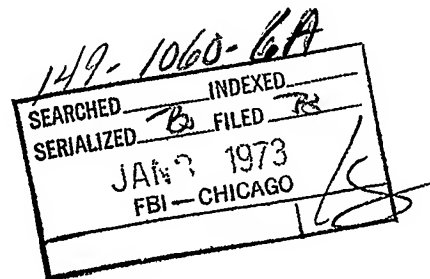
FROM : SA ROBERT J. DOLAN

SUBJECT: CRASH OF UNITED AIR LINES
FLIGHT 553, A BOEING 737
AT CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
12/8/72
DAMV

On 12/9/72, Mr. [REDACTED] Public Relations, Holy Cross Hospital, 2701 West 68th Street, Chicago, Illinois, telephone 434-6700, advised that survivors of the crash of United Air Lines Flight 553 of 12/8/72, presently admitted as patients at that hospital and will not be discharged until 12/10/72 at the earliest date. The decision as to discharging of these survivors will be based entirely on the medical condition at the time as well as the emotional stability of the patient. Such discharges may occur commencing Sunday, 12/10/72. In any event, Mr. [REDACTED] stated that the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be notified regarding the discharging of such patients.

b6
b7C

RJD/capd
(1)
capd



5010-108-01

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, CHICAGO (149-1060)

DATE: 12/11/72

FROM : SA THOMAS J. GREEN

SUBJECT: CRASH OF UNITED ARI LINES,
FLIGHT 553, Boeing 737,
Chicago, Ill., 12/8/72
DAMV

On 12/8/72 liaison was established at Cook County Morgue with Coroner DR. [redacted] Asst. [redacted], Director [redacted] Chicago P.D. Crime Laboratory, Commander [redacted] Homicide Div, Chicago P.D. and LT. [redacted] Commander, Area 3 Homicide Section, Chicago P.D. This matter assigned to Area 3 Homicide Section, Chicago P.D.

b6
b7C

SAs [redacted] and [redacted] were assigned at the Morgue with SA THOMAS J. GREEN and obtained data concerning description, background and other information available to identify the victims through view of bodies, and search of clothing valuables, and other items recovered with assistance of officers of Chicago P.D., Area 3 Homicide and Area 4 Homicide. All information gained was furnished Chicago Office to be submitted to Identification Div. to search for fingerprints of victims.

On 12/9/72 SAs [redacted] and THOMAS J. GREEN assisted SA BEVERLY PONDER, Identification Division and other members of his DISASTER SQUAD at Cook County Morgue.

b6
b7C

On 12/10/72 SAs [redacted] and [redacted] assisted SA PONDER and the DISASTER SQUAD at Cook County Morgue.

The Disaster Squad maintained their results of identification and fingerprints obtained by them.

(1)
TJG/

all pertinent info's and inserts furnished to [redacted] NTSB, 12/11/72 RGT

149-1060-7

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 3 1973	
FBI - CHICAGO	

b6
b7C



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, CHICAGO (149-1060)

DATE: 1/31/73

FROM : SA ROBERT E. HARTZ -C-

SUBJECT: CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES
FLIGHT 553, BOEING 737,
—CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, 12/8/72
DAMV
OO: Chicago

All pertinent information developed by the Chicago Office concerning captioned matter was furnished to the National Transportation Safety Board.

It is recommended this matter be closed.

CLOSE

(1)



5010-108-01

149-1060-16

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JAN 31 1973	
FBI — CHICAGO	

shipped 1-31-73
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

Transmit attached by Facsimile - PLAINTEXT

Priority Immediate

To: SAC, Chicago

Date: 6/6/73

From: Acting Director, FBI (149-10028)

Time Transmitted -

Subject: Crash of United Airlines Flight

Received -

553, Boeing 737, Chicago, Ill.
12/17/72 DAME☐ Fingerprint Photo☐ Fingerprint Record☐ Map☐ Newspaper clipping☐ Photograph☐ Artists Conception☒ OtherLetter from National
Transportation Safety Board
6/5/73☐ (6 min)☐ (4 min)

Special handling instructions:



5720

Approved: afk

b6

b7C

144-1060-158

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 6 1973	
FBI-CHICAGO	

F B I

Date: 6-6-73

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)

TO ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI (149-10024)

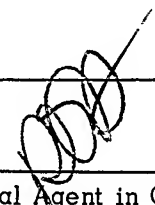
FROM SAC, CHICAGO(149-1060)

CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 553, BOEING 737, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
12/8/72. DAMV. OO: CHICAGO

RE BUREAU FACSIMILE THIS DATE.

FOR INFO OF BUREAU, RESULTS OF ALL INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED BY THE CHICAGO OFFICE CONCERNING CAPTIONED CRASH WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD(NTSB) IMMEDIATELY AFTER IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THERE WAS APPARENTLY NO VIOLATION OF THE DAMV STATUTE IN THIS CRASH. THERE IS NO FURTHER INFORMATION IN THE CHICAGO FILE CONCERNING THIS CRASH. THIS INFORMATION WAS FURNISHED TO NTSB ON DECEMBER 11, 1972. AS THE BUREAU IS AWARE, THE PURPOSE OF THE FBI INVESTIGATION WAS TO DETERMINE IF THERE WAS A VIOLATION OF THE DAMV STATUTE IN CONNECTION WITH THE CRASH. APPROXIMATELY 50 PERSONNEL ARRIVED AT THE SCENE OF THE CRASH, STARTING WITHIN 45 MINUTES OF THE CRASH AND CONTINUING FOR AN ADDITIONAL HOUR. AGENTS WERE DISPATCHED TO THE TOWER AT MIDWAY AND TO INTERVIEW FLIGHT ATTENDANTS INASMUCH AS ~~THIS WAS A~~ LOGICAL INVESTIGATIVE STEP ~~TO DETERMINE IF~~ ~~THESE WERE~~ THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF SABOTAGE IN THE CRASH OF THE AIRCRAFT.

1-BUREAU
KMG:SR
(1)

Approved: 
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 6 42 p M Per WA

PAGE TWO
CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES

THE FACT THAT AGENTS ARRIVED BEFORE NTSB INVESTIGATORS IS CERTAINLY NO REFLECTION ON THE FBI, BUT PERHAPS ON NTSB. THE TECHNICAL ABILITY OF THE AGENTS WHO RECOGNIZED THE STALL SIGNAL IN THE VOICE RECORDER OCCASIONED SOME COMMENT FROM NTSB INASMUCH AS THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY NOT AWARE OF THE ABILITIES OF OUR INVESTIGATORS. THERE WAS NOTHING UNUSUAL ON THE PART OF THE FBI IN ITS INVESTIGATION NOR WAS IT A NON-TYPICAL INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE. THE CHICAGO OFFICE DISPATCHED SUFFICIENT PERSONNEL TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE IF THERE WAS A VIOLATION. WHEN IT WAS DEVELOPED THAT THERE APPARENTLY WAS NO VIOLATION OVER WHICH THIS BUREAU HAD JURISDICTION, ALL OUR INFORMATION WAS TURNED OVER TO NTSB. NTSB HAS RECEIVED COPIES OF ALL INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE FBI IN THIS INVESTIGATION AND THERE IS NOTHING WHATSOEVER IN THE CHICAGO FILE WHICH COULD BE ADDED TO THE INFORMATION ALREADY FURNISHED.

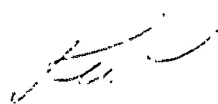
IT IS POINTED OUT THAT AT THE SCENE OF THE CRASH, NTSB INVESTIGATORS AND FAA REPRESENTATIVES AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF UNITED AIRLINES WERE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE ACTIONS OF THE FBI. AT NO TIME DID THE FBI INTERFERE WITH THE ACTIONS OF THE CHICAGO PD OR WITH THE CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT, ON WHOM RESPONSIBILITY RESTED TO SECURE THE SITE OF THE CRASH AND TO CONTROL THE CROWDS. CHICAGO PD ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF FBI PRESENCE AT CRASH SCENE

PAGE THREE
CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES

IT IS POINTED OUT ALSO THAT IN THE LETTER TO ACTING DIRECTOR RUCKELSHAUS FROM JOHN H. REED IT IS MENTIONED THAT MRS. E. HOWARD HUNT WAS KILLED IN THE CRASH AND SHE IS THE WIFE OF AN INDIVIDUAL CONNECTED IN THE WATERGATE INVESTIGATION. FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BUREAU, THE CHICAGO OFFICE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS RELATIONSHIP AT THE TIME IT ARRIVED AT THE SCENE OF THE CRASH AND WAS NOT AWARE OF HER IDENTITY UNTIL THE FBI PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION WAS COMPLETED. THE FACT THAT SHE WAS ABOARD THAT AIRCRAFT HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH FBI ACTION IN THIS INSTANCE. THE FACT THAT \$10,000 WAS FOUND IN THE POSSESSION OF MRS. HUNT BY PERSONS WHO WERE CONDUCTING SALVAGE OPERATIONS OF THE AIRCRAFT ALSO OCCURRED AFTER THE FBI HAD REMOVED ITSELF FROM THE IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION. IT IS POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON FOR ANYBODY TO MAKE AN ALLEGATION THAT THE FBI PARTICIPATED IN THIS INVESTIGATION BECAUSE IT WAS CONNECTED WITH WATERGATE.

IT IS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE DISASTER SQUAD FROM THE IDENTIFICATION DIVISION ARRIVED IN CHICAGO SHORTLY AFTER THE DISASTER AND IN COOPERATION WITH UNITED AIRLINES, THE CHICAGO PD EFFECTED IDENTIFICATION OF THE DEAD PASSENGERS. THIS WAS ROUTINE INVESTIGATION ON THE PART OF THE FBI AND HAD ABSOLUTELY NO CONNECTION WITH A POSSIBLE DAMV VIOLATION.

IT IS AGAIN REITERATED THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING UNUSUAL OR UNTYPICAL IN THE FBI'S PARTICIPATION OF THIS CRASH. THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ACTUAL CRASH WAS TERMINATED WITHIN 20 HOURS OF THE ACCIDENT AND ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION FURNISHED TO NTSB.



F B I

Date: 6-1-73

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)

TO ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI(149-10024)

FROM SAC, CHICAGO(149-1060)

CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 553, BOEING 737, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
12-8-72. DAMV. OO: CHICAGO.RE CHICAGO TEL JUNE 6 LAST AND BU PHONE CALL TO CHICAGO THIS
DATE.

SA ROBERT E. HARTZ PROCEEDED TO MIDWAY TOWER SHORTLY AFTER
CRASH OF UNITED FLIGHT 553. HE WAS DISPATCHED TO MIDWAY TOWER
AS A LOGICAL INVESTIGATIVE STEP TO DETERMINE IF THERE WAS A POSSIBLE
VIOLATION OF THE DAMV STATUTE CONCERNED WITH THE UNITED AIRLINE
FLIGHT CRASH. ON ARRIVING AT THE TOWER, SA HARTZ IDENTIFIED HIM-
SELF AS AN FBI AGENT AND EXPLAINED THE REASON FOR HIS PRESENCE.
HE WAS INVITED BY THE CHIEF FAA REPRESENTATIVE AT THE TOWER AND
BY MR. NEAL CALLAHAN, PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR, FAA REGIONAL
HEADQUARTERS, CHICAGO, TO LISTEN TO THE RECORDING MADE IN THE TOWER
OF THE CONVERSATION HELD BY THE TOWER WITH UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT
553. AT NO TIME DID SA HARTZ REQUEST TO BE ALLOWED TO LISTEN TO
THE TAPES. AFTER LISTENING TO THE TAPES, SA HARTZ IDENTIFIED A
SOUND AS BEING THAT OF THE STALL INDICATOR ON THE AIRCRAFT. THE

1-BUREAU
KMG:SR

(1)

Approved: _____

Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____

M

Per _____


WA 754

Jmn

PAGE TWO
CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 553

FAA PERSONNEL AGREED THAT SA HARTZ WAS RIGHT AND IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED FAA HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON.

THE RESULTS OF THE CHICAGO FBI INVESTIGATION WERE TURNED OVER TO MR. BILL LAMB OF NTSB ON DECEMBER 11, 1972. MR. LAMB WAS MOST PROFUSE IN HIS THANKS TO THE FBI FOR THIS ASSISTANCE IN THIS INVESTIGATION.



F B I

Date: 6-14-73

Transmit the following in PLAINTEXT
(Type in plaintext or code)Via TELETYPE URGENT
(Priority)

TO ACTING DIRECTOR, FBI(149-10024)

FROM SAC, CHICAGO(149-1060)

CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 553, BOEING 737, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS,
12-8-72. DAMV. OO: CHICAGO.

RE CHICAGO TELS 6/6 AND 7/73.

FOR INFO OF BUREAU, NTSB CALLED A HEARING AT THE SHERATON-
O'HARE MOTEL NEAR O'HARE FIELD SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF HEARING
TESTIMONY ON THE PART OF SHERMAN SKOLNICK. THIS HEARING WAS CALLED
AT REQUEST OF UNITED AIRLINES INASMUCH AS SKOLNICK HAD MADE MANY
ACCUSATIONS ACCUSING UNITED AIRLINES, COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM,
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION AND THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT OF BEING
IMPLICATED IN ^{AN} ~~THE~~ ALLEGED COVERUP OF THE CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES
FLIGHT 553.

THE HEARING WAS CONVENED JUNE 13, 1973, AND IS CONTINUING
THROUGH 6-14. SKOLNICK HAS MADE ^{SEVERAL RIDICULOUS} ~~LED~~ ACCUSATIONS CONCERNING THE
FBI, ONE OF WHICH WAS THAT 100 FBI AGENTS WERE STAKED OUT IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE CRASH BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN ADVISED BEFOREHAND
THAT THE AIRPLANE WAS GOING TO CRASH. SKOLNICK HAS ACCUSED FBI

KMG:SR
(1)

149-1060-21

Searched	_____
Serialized	_____
Indexed	_____
Filed	_____

Approved: _____
Special Agent in ChargeSent 355P M

Per _____


PAGE TWO CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES

AGENTS OF REMOVING TWO MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE AIRCRAFT. HE HAS ALLEGED THAT MANY OF THE PASSENGERS ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT DIED OF CYANIDE POISONING. HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO CONNECT THE CRASH OF UNITED AIRLINES WITH THE WATERGATE INVESTIGATION BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THE WIFE OF E. HOWARD HUNT WAS ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT AND WAS KILLED. *ALSO LINKED CRASH TO A PIPELINE LOBBY INVESTMENT- ALLEGED SCANDALS IN SWITZERLAND, LEGISLATIVE ACTS IN COSTA RICA AND UNDERWORLD DEALINGS IN STOLEN CURRENCY.*

THE CHICAGO OFFICE HAS HAD NO OBSERVER PRESENT AT THESE HEARINGS. *AND DOES NOT INTEND TO.* UNITED AIRLINES SECURITY PERSONNEL HAVE KEPT THIS OFFICE ADVISED OF SKOLNICK'S TESTIMONY.

THE NEWS MEDIA IN THE CHICAGO AREA HAVE BEEN GIVING COVERAGE TO THE HEARING BUT HAVE INDICATED THAT SKOLNICK'S TESTIMONY AND THE TESTIMONY OF THE WITNESSES HE CALLED HAS BEEN COMPLETELY UNSUBSTANTIATED. *ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS* ~~AND IT IS DEFINITELY NOT BELIEVED BY THE PERSONS~~ *PERSONS* IN ATTENDANCE. *SHAKENED THROUGHOUT SKOLNICK'S TESTIMONY.* UNITED AIRLINES SECURITY PERSONNEL HAVE ADVISED THAT EVERYTHING THAT SKOLNICK HAS STATED CONCERNING THE CRASH HAS NOT BEEN SUBSTANTIATED AND IS OBVIOUSLY A FIGMENT OF SKOLNICK'S IMAGINATION.

THIS INFO BEING FURNISHED TO BUREAU BECAUSE OF THE NEWS COVERAGE OF THE HEARING AND THE POSSIBILITY BUREAU MAY RECEIVE INQUIRIES.



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC (149-1060)

DATE: 9/10/73

FROM : ASAC JOHN W. O'ROURKE

SUBJECT: CRASH OF UNITED AIR LINES
FLIGHT #553, BOEING 737,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
12/8/72
DAMV

SHERMAN SKOLNICK telephonically contacted me at 9:56 AM this date and stated that he just wanted to be sure that the four pieces of paper belonging to Mrs. HUNT (Mrs. E. HOWARD HUNT) which were received at the Chicago Office of the FBI this morning were not destroyed. SKOLNICK was extremely cryptic in his remarks and added, "We know what the contents of the papers are," and, "We will withhold any comment about them for a short time."

When requested to furnish additional details concerning the delivery of the papers and/or their contents, SKOLNICK only stated that the papers were delivered to the second in command of the Chicago Office. At this point I advised SKOLNICK that I was the Assistant Special Agent in Charge and had not received any such papers. SKOLNICK refused to furnish any additional information concerning this matter other than to say that he was a "public minded citizen" and was merely suggesting that the papers not be destroyed.

A check with the receptionist as well as the complaint agents and the appropriate supervisor handling captioned case developed no information concerning any papers received at the office.

It is noted that at approximately 10:10 AM this date Supervisor GRANT received a telephonic inquiry from



JWO:msp

(1)

149-1060-22

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
SEP 11 1973	
FBI - CHICAGO	

CG 149-1060

City News concerning the FBI's possession of papers belonging to Mrs. HUNT referred to by SKOLNICK. This inquiry was answered to the effect that this office had no knowledge of what Mr. SKOLNICK was talking about relative to the four papers.